

A Primer to Seeds of Change

Farmers, Biotechnology and the New Face of Agriculture

Everyone has heard both the positives and negatives of Genetically Modified Crops from biotech companies such as Monsanto or Aventis and from environmental groups like Greenpeace, yet no one has actually heard from those who actually grow the food we eat - the farmers.

"Around the world Canada or Ethiopia it's the same farmers have been kept out of the loop in terms of the development of new technologies."

Pat Roy Mooney, activist

Seeds of Change, a seventy-minute video documentary, made by University of Manitoba professor Stephane McLachlan, PhD student Ian Mauro and videographer Jim Sanders has just been released and is a balanced exposé of the controversy surrounding Genetically Modified (GM) crops and how it has changed the face of agriculture in western Canada.

"It works on both sides you have the extreme groups on the anti-GMO, you also have big business...telling you something else on the other side. We're stuck in the middle..."

Greg Goldsborough, farmer

This fast-paced and moving film documents the views of western farmers on both the benefits and risks associated with using GM crops.

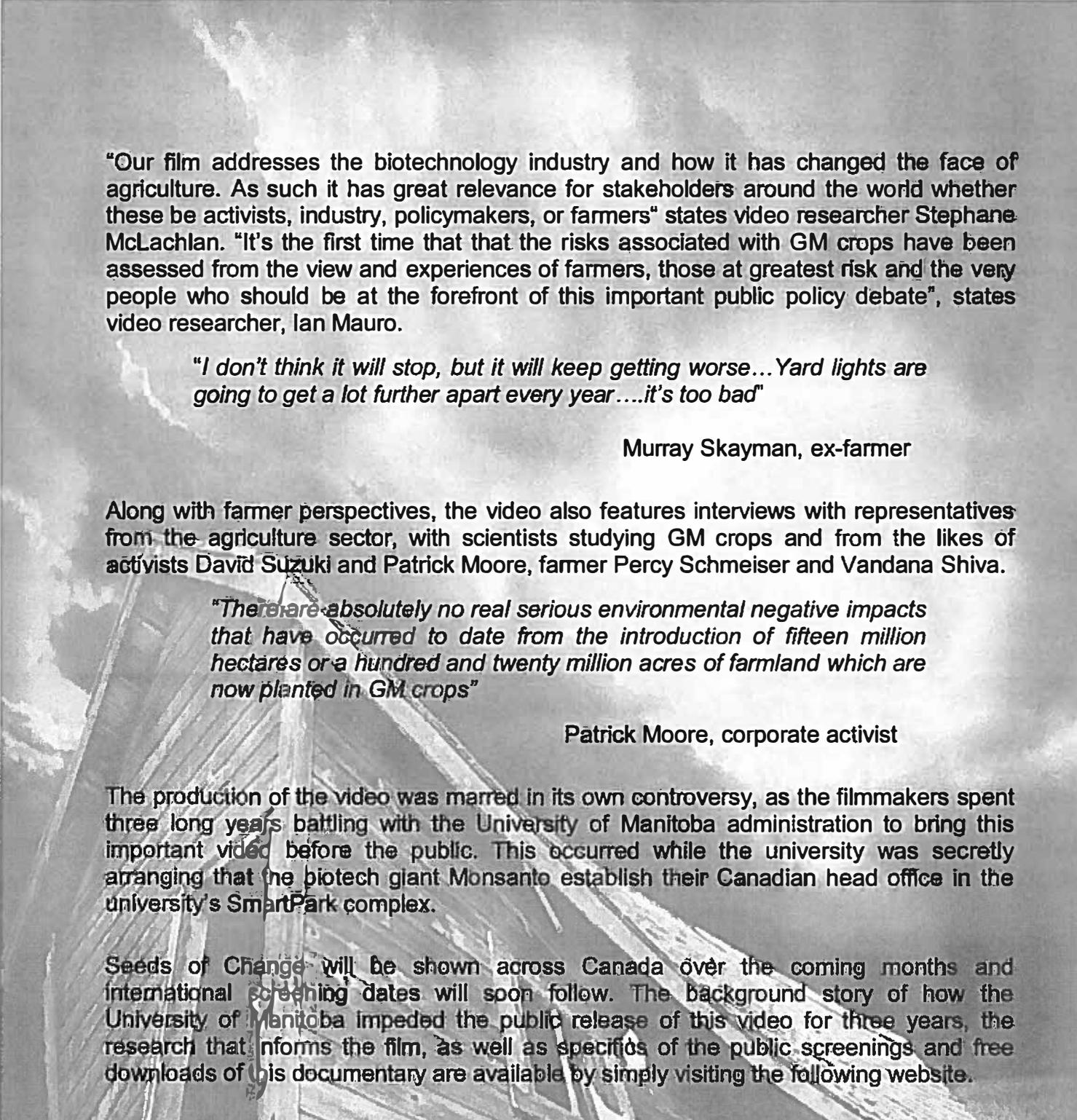
"...if you want to find out if they're dangerous or not just watch the Canadians they're doing the experiment for us. We have been involved in a massive experiment for over five years now, GMO's are in the food stream and we've never given our consent."

David Suzuki, environmental activist

The Seeds of Change video provides the public an opportunity to hear firsthand accounts of the good, the bad and the ugly of GM crops, from those who are most familiar with these products, the farmer. It is especially critical of Monsanto and the impacts that this company and its products are having on farmers and rural communities across the west.

"My rights as a farmer have been taken away because now I can no longer grow canola under fear of a lawsuit by Monsanto, unless I grow Monsanto's Roundup Ready canola."

Percy Schmeiser, farmer



"Our film addresses the biotechnology industry and how it has changed the face of agriculture. As such it has great relevance for stakeholders around the world whether these be activists, industry, policymakers, or farmers" states video researcher Stephane McLachlan. "It's the first time that the risks associated with GM crops have been assessed from the view and experiences of farmers, those at greatest risk and the very people who should be at the forefront of this important public policy debate", states video researcher, Ian Mauro.

"I don't think it will stop, but it will keep getting worse...Yard lights are going to get a lot further apart every year....it's too bad"

Murray Skayman, ex-farmer

Along with farmer perspectives, the video also features interviews with representatives from the agriculture sector, with scientists studying GM crops and from the likes of activists David Suzuki and Patrick Moore, farmer Percy Schmeiser and Vandana Shiva.

"There are absolutely no real serious environmental negative impacts that have occurred to date from the introduction of fifteen million hectares or a hundred and twenty million acres of farmland which are now planted in GM crops"

Patrick Moore, corporate activist

The production of the video was marred in its own controversy, as the filmmakers spent three long years battling with the University of Manitoba administration to bring this important video before the public. This occurred while the university was secretly arranging that the biotech giant Monsanto establish their Canadian head office in the university's SmartPark complex.

Seeds of Change will be shown across Canada over the coming months and international screening dates will soon follow. The background story of how the University of Manitoba impeded the public release of this video for three years, the research that informs the film, as well as specifics of the public screenings and free downloads of this documentary are available by simply visiting the following website.